

5 AAC 75.XXX. STATEWIDE WILD TROUT FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

(a) The Board of Fisheries (Board) finds that wild trout and their attendant ecosystems in Alaska are important to Alaskans, their quality of life, and the Alaskan economy.

(b) The Board finds that wild trout should be managed for optimal sustained yield. Optimal sustained yield, as defined in 5 AAC 75.XXX (*Policy for the Management of Sustainable Wild Trout Fisheries*), will be based on management objectives that maximize benefits of the fisheries while maintaining genetic diversity, biologically desirable size composition, and at abundance levels sufficient such that stocking is not required to enhance or supplement the wild stock or fishery.

(c) Management strategies for wild trout should be consistent with the 5 AAC 75.XXX (*Policy for the Management of Sustainable Wild Trout Fisheries*).

(d) Recognizing the lack of stock status information, the potential for increased angler participation throughout Alaska, the desire to maintain quality fisheries and habitat, the potential for loss of opportunity, and the potential for over-exploitation, the Board will manage wild trout fisheries conservatively. The primary tools for conservative management are catch and release, use of unbaited single hook artificial lures, and spawning season closures.

(e) To achieve diverse fishing opportunities, the Board may further provide special management or conservative harvest opportunities as follows:

(1) The board may, in its discretion, consider special management areas for fisheries that would diversify sport-fishing opportunity, including but not limited to fly-fishing only, catch and release, limited access fisheries, or trophy fishing. When the board considers proposed regulatory changes for such a management area, the board will consider the changes in accordance with the following criteria:

(A) stock status: the body or bodies of water must contain wild trout that are self-sustaining; the wild trout fisheries must have retained desired size composition, and numbers of wild trout or the area must have retained the habitat attributes necessary to allow these stock characteristics to return to desired proportions if regulations dealing with establishment of a body or bodies of water as a special management area are adopted;

(B) history of special management: a body or bodies of water that the public perceives as having provided quality wild trout fishing in the past is preferred over a water that does not have a history of "quality" wild trout fishing;

(C) historic and current consumptive uses;

(D) legal access;

(E) clear geographical boundaries: a body or bodies of water with clearly distinguishable legal regulatory boundaries is preferred. This refers to the angling public's ability to clearly distinguish the legal regulatory boundary of a candidate water;

- 41 (F) geographical distribution of special management waters: this criterion
42 considers the proximity of a body or bodies of water to other special
43 management waters and the availability of alternative locations not designated
44 for special management; and,
- 45 (G) research, education, rehabilitation or unique considerations: a body or bodies
46 of water may be designated for special management for research or
47 educational reasons.
- 48 (2) In the absence of special management as defined in (1) of this section, the Board
49 may provide conservative harvest opportunities on wild trout. When establishing
50 a consumptive use fishery, the maximum allowable harvest is two fish daily.
51 When the board considers proposed regulatory changes to establish a consumptive
52 use fishery, the board will consider the following criteria:
- 53 (A) stock status: the body or bodies of water must contain a sufficient abundance
54 of wild trout, given the harvest opportunities under consideration, to maintain
55 the fishery without depleting target stocks;
- 56 (B) clear geographical boundaries: a body or bodies of water with clearly
57 distinguishable legal regulatory boundaries is preferred. This refers to the
58 angling public's ability to clearly distinguish the legal regulatory boundary of
59 a candidate water;
- 60 (C) participation in the fishery: the number of anglers who have participated in
61 each fishery in the past and the number of anglers who can reasonably be
62 expected to participate in the future;
- 63 (D) utilization: the importance of each fishery for providing anglers the
64 opportunity to obtain fish for personal and family consumption;
- 65 (E) the availability of alternative fisheries resources; and,
- 66 (F) need for further regulation: consideration of additional size or seasonal limits.